

CLAIMS

1. A method for a spoken language system, comprising:
 - generating a recognized sequence of words from a sequence of received
 - 5 spoken words;
 - assigning a confidence score to each word in the recognized sequence of
 - words; and
 - adjusting nominal acoustical properties of words in a presentation of the
 - recognized sequence of words, the adjustment performed according to the
 - 10 confidence score of each word.
2. The method according to claim 1, wherein adjusting comprises:
 - adjusting the presentation using a lengthened interword pause proximate to
 - a word having a low confidence score, wherein the lengthened interword pause is
 - 15 recognizably greater than interword pauses otherwise used for words having a
 - confidence score within a normal range.
3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the lengthened interword pause is
- inserted directly following the word having a low confidence score.
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4. The method according to claim 2, wherein the lengthened interword pause is
- inserted after a group of words that includes the word having a low confidence
- score.
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5. The method according to claim 2, wherein the lengthened interword pause is
- inserted following the word having a low confidence score, and the duration of the
- pause is determined based on an amount by which the confidence score indicates
- a confidence below the normal range.
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6. The method according to claim 2, wherein the lengthened interword pause is
- inserted following the word having a below normal confidence score, and a

duration of the lengthened interword pause is determined based on a likely duration of the corrective response.

5 7. The method according to claim 6, wherein the likely duration of the corrective response is one of a duration of a button press and a duration of the words predicted to be spoken during the lengthened interword pause.

8. The method according to claim 2, wherein the lengthened interword pause is inserted directly preceding the word having a below normal confidence score.

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9. The method according to claim 8, wherein the duration of the lengthened interword pause is increased for lower confidence scores.

10. The method according to claim 1, wherein adjusting comprises:
15 modifying a nominal value of one or more of a set of acoustical features for a word having a confidence score outside of a normal range.

11. The method according to claim 10, wherein the set of acoustical features comprises interword pause, duration, pitch range, intonational contour, intensity,
20 phonation type, and precision of articulation.

12. The method according to claim 10, wherein the modifying comprises at least one of:
 increasing at least one of the interword pause, the duration of the word, the
25 pitch range of the word, the loudness of the word, and the precision of articulation of the word when the confidence score indicates a lower than nominal confidence;
 and
 decreasing at least one of the interword pause, the duration of the word,
the pitch range of the word, the loudness of the word, and the precision of
30 articulation of the word when the confidence score indicates a higher than nominal confidence.

13. The method according to claim 10, wherein the set of acoustical features further comprises a duration change of each syllable of the word, and wherein a differential change of the duration of each syllable is determined by a lexical stress parameter of the syllable.

14. The method according to claim 10, wherein adjusting comprises:
adjusting the presentation using a phrase contour that conveys uncertainty within a group of words that includes a word having a confidence score below the normal range.

15. A spoken language system, comprising:
a recognition component that generates a recognized sequence of words from a sequence of received spoken words, and assigns a confidence score to each word in the recognized sequence of words; and
a presentation component that adjusts nominal acoustical properties of words in a presentation of the recognized sequence of words, the adjustment performed according to the confidence score of each word.

16. A portable electronic device, comprising:
a radio transceiver that can establish a telephone call;
a recognition component that generates a recognized sequence of words from a sequence of received spoken words, and assigns a confidence score to each word in the recognized sequence of words; and
a presentation component that adjusts nominal acoustical properties of words in a presentation of the recognized sequence of words, the adjustment performed according to the confidence score of each word.